



**Department of  
Veterans Affairs**

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# Fact Sheet

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## Facts about VA's National Cemeteries

National cemeteries are national shrines in communities where deceased veterans receive perpetual care to commemorate their service as members of the U.S. armed forces. Most men and women who have served in the military are eligible for burial in a national cemetery, as are their dependent children and usually their spouses. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) manages the country's network of national cemeteries through its National Cemetery Administration.

- VA maintains more than 2.7 million gravesites at 122 national cemeteries in 39 states and Puerto Rico, as well as in 33 soldier's lots and monument sites. Occupied gravesites may hold the remains of more than one family member.
- Approximately 290,000 full-casket gravesites, 55,700 in-ground gravesites for cremated remains, and 52,400 columbarium niches are available in already developed acreage in our 122 national cemeteries.
- There are approximately 15,300 acres within established national cemeteries. Just over half are undeveloped and -- along with available gravesites in developed acreage -- have the potential to provide more than 3.6 million gravesites.
- Of the 122 national cemeteries, 62 are open to all interments; 22 can accommodate cremated remains and the remains of family members for interment in the same gravesite as a previously deceased family member; and 38 will perform only interments of family members in the same gravesite as a previously deceased family member.
- Since 1973, annual interments in VA national cemeteries have increased by more than 150 percent, from 36,400 to more than 93,000 in fiscal year 2005. Interments are expected to increase annually until 2009.
- More than 683,000 veterans in the U.S. and Puerto Rico died in 2005. Historically, about 12 percent of U.S. veterans choose burial in VA national and state cemeteries.
- The nation's most famous national cemetery -- Arlington National Cemetery -- is one of the few not run by VA. It is administered by the Army.

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*Commemorating 75 Years of Service*

## VA National Cemeteries 2/2/2

- Of the more than 93,000 interments conducted in fiscal year 2005, 72.6 percent were in the 20 busiest national cemeteries: Riverside, Calif.; Florida, in Bushnell; Calverton, N.Y.; Fort Snelling, Minn.; Jefferson Barracks in St. Louis; Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas; Fort Logan in Denver; Willamette in Portland, Ore.; National Memorial Cemetery of Arizona in Phoenix; Houston; Dallas-Fort Worth; Fort Rosecrans in San Diego; Massachusetts in Bourne; Abraham Lincoln in Elmwood, Ill.; San Joaquin Valley in Gustine, Calif.; Tahoma in Kent, Wash.; Long Island, N.Y.; Indiantown Gap in Annville, Pa.; Ohio Western Reserve in Rittman; and Puerto Rico in Bayamon.
- As of Sept. 30, 2005, seven national cemeteries each contained more than 100,000 occupied gravesites, collectively accounting for 38 percent of all NCA gravesites maintained: Long Island, Calverton, Fort Snelling, Riverside, Jefferson Barracks, Golden Gate, Calif., and Willamette National Cemeteries.
- Largest national cemetery: Calverton, N.Y., 1,045 acres.  
Smallest national cemetery: Hampton (Va.) at the VA Medical Center, .03 acres.  
Oldest national cemeteries: 14 established in 1862 (12 currently maintained by VA).  
Newest national cemetery: Great Lakes, in Michigan, in October 2005.
- Since 1973, VA has provided more than 9.1 million headstones and markers. In fiscal year 2005, VA provided 363,600 headstones and markers.
- VA provided more than 487,800 Presidential Memorial Certificates to the loved ones of deceased veterans in fiscal year 2005.
- Since 1980, the State Cemetery Grants Program has awarded or obligated more than \$245 million to 34 states and Guam for the establishment, expansion or improvement of 65 state veterans cemeteries. In fiscal year 2005, VA-supported state cemeteries provided more than 20,000 interments.
- Volunteers donated approximately 381,000 hours at national cemeteries during fiscal year 2005.
- More than 8.8 million people visited VA national cemeteries in fiscal year 2005.
- In 1999 and 2003, with the passage of two laws, Congress directed VA to establish 12 new national cemeteries. One has been opened in Oklahoma, one in Pennsylvania and one in Michigan. The rest – one in Alabama, two in California, three in Florida, one in Georgia, one in Pennsylvania and one in South Carolina – will be located near large populations of veterans who currently do not have access to a burial option.

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